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A CLUSTER OF GRAPES

A BOOK OF TWENTIETH CENTURY POETRY

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"Hee doth not onely shew the way, as will entice anie man to enter into it: nay he doth as if your journey should lye through a faire vineyard, at the verie first, give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste, you may long to passe further."

LONDON: ERSKINE MACDONALD
1914

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PREFACE

IF the existence and contents of this book require any explanation, the compiler may adopt the words of a famous defender of poetry:

"Hee doth not onely shew the way but giveth so sweet a prospect into the way as will entice anie man into it.

"Nay, hee doth as if your journey should lye through a faire Vineyard, at the verie first give you a cluster of Grapes that full of that taste you may long to passe further. He beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must blurre the margent with interpretations and loade the memorie with doubtfulnesse, but hee cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with or prepared for the well-enchanting skill of musicke, and with a tale forsoothe he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play and olde men from the chimney-corner, and pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the minde from wickedness to vertue."

These excellent words of Sir Philip Sidney give the reason and scope of this collection of examples of the poetry of the present century. No attempt at arbitrary classification or labelling has been made; it is not intended to show that any poet, deliberately or otherwise, is a Neo-Symbolist or Paroxyst or is afflicted with any other 'ist or 'ism; it is not compiled to assert that any one group of poets is superior to any other group of poets or to poets who had the misfortune to have their corporeal existence cut short before the dawn of the twentieth century; it is not even intended to prove that good poetry is written in our time. All such purposes and particularly the latter are superfluous and may be

left to dogmatic disputants who have little care for the grace and harmony of poetry.

The scheme of the Anthology is simple and without guile. It does not pre-suppose an abrupt period, but for the sake of convenience and in justification of its existence includes only the work of living writers produced during the present century and therefore most likely to be representative of the poetry of to-day. No editorial credit can be claimed for the selections: they are not the reflex of one individual's taste and preferences, but have been made by the writers themselves, to whom—and their respective publishers—for their cordial co-operation the collator of this distinctive volume is exceedingly grateful, not on his own account only but also on behalf of those readers to whom this volume will open out so fair a prospect that they will long to pass further, this "cluster of grapes" being one of the "lures immortal" for the rapidly increasing number of discriminating lovers of the high poetry that is the touchstone of beauty. The finest lyric work of our day needs no further introduction: the poet is his own best interpreter; but it may be added, in anticipation of adventitious criticism of the limitations of these examples, that the capacity of the present volume and the absence abroad of some potential contributors account for the non-inclusion of certain writers who otherwise would have been represented here.

GALLOWAY KYLE.

May, 1914.

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RECONCILIATION

I BEGIN through the grass once again to be bound to the Lord;
I can see, through a face that has faded, the face full of rest
Of the earth, of the mother, my heart with her heart in accord,
As I lie mid the cool green tresses that mantle her breast
I begin with the grass once again to be bound to the Lord.

By the hand of a child I am led to the throne of the King
For a touch that now fevers me not is forgotten and far,
And His infinite sceptred hands that sway us can bring
Me in dreams from the laugh of a child to the song of a star.
On the laugh of a child I am borne to the joy of the King.

THE MAN TO THE ANGEL

I HAVE wept a million tears:
Pure and proud one, where are thine,
What the gain though all thy years
In unbroken beauty shine?

All your beauty cannot win
Truth we learn in pain and sighs:
You can never enter in
To the circle of the wise.

They are but the slaves of light
Who have never known the gloom,
And between the dark and bright
Willed in freedom their own doom.

Think not in your pureness there,
That our pain but follows sin:
There are fires for those who dare
Seek the throne of might to w

Pure one, from your pride refrai
Dark and lost amid the strife
I am myriad years of pain
Nearer to the fount of life.

When defiance fierce is thrown
At the god to whom you bow,
Rest the lips of the Unknown
Tenderest upon my brow.

BABYLON

THE blue dusk ran between the streets:
my love was winged within my mind,
It left to-day and yesterday and thrice a
thousand years behind.
To-day was past and dead for me, for from
to-day my feet had run
Through thrice a thousand years to walk the
ways of ancient Babylon.
On temple top and palace roof the burnished
gold flung back the rays
Of a red sunset that was dead and lost beyond
a million days.
The tower of heaven turns darker blue, a
starry sparkle now begins;
The mystery and magnificence, the myriad
beauty and the sins
Come back to me. I walk beneath the shadowy
multitude of towers;
Within the gloom the fountain jets its pallid
mist in lily flowers.
The waters lull me and the scent of many
gardens, and I hear
Familiar voices, and the voice I love is whis-
pering in my ear.
Oh real as in dream all this; and then a hand
on mine is laid:
The wave of phantom time withdraws; and
that young Babylonian maid,

Æ

One drop of beauty left behind from all the
flowing of that tide,
Is looking with the self-same eyes, and here in
Ireland by my side.
Oh light our life in Babylon, but Babylon has
taken wings,
While we are in the calm and proud procession of eternal things.

ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON

MAKING HASTE

"SOON!" says the Snowdrop, and smiles at the motherly earth,
"Soon!—for the Spring with her languors comes stealthily on
Snow was my cradle, and chill winds sang at my birth;
Winter is over—and I must make haste to be gone!"

"Soon," says the Swallow, and dips to the wind-ruffled stream,
"Grain is all garnered—the Summer is over and done;
Bleak to the eastward the icy battalions gleam,
Summer is over—and I must make haste to be gone!"

"Soon—ah, too soon!" says the Soul, with a pitiful gaze,
"Soon!—for I rose like a star, and for aye would have shone!
See the pale shuddering dawn, that must wither my rays,
Leaps from the mountains—and I must make haste to be gone!"

A. C. Benson

AT EVENTIDE

AT morn I saw the level plain
So rich and small beneath my feet,
A sapphire sea without a stain,
And fields of golden-waving wheat;
Lingering I said, " At noon I'll be
At peace by that sweet-scented tide.
How far, how fair my course shall be,
Before I come to the Eventide! "

Where is it fled, that radiant plain?
I stumble now in miry ways;
Dark clouds drift landward, big with rain,
And lonely moors their summits raise.
On, on with hurrying feet I range,
And left and right in the dumb hillside
Grey gorges open, drear and strange,
And so I come to the Eventide!

A. C. Benson

IN A COLLEGE GARDEN

BIRDS, that cry so loud in the old,
green bowery garden,
Your song is of *Love! Love! Love!*
Will ye weary not nor cease?
For the loveless soul grows sick, the heart
that the grey days harden;
I know too well that ye love! I would ye
should hold your peace.

I too have seen Love rise, like a star; I have
marked his setting;
I dreamed in my folly and pride that Life
without Love were peace.
But if Love should await me yet, in the land
of sleep and forgetting—
Ah, bird, could you sing me this, I would
not your song should cease!

ANNA BUNSTON (Mrs de BARY)

A MORTGAGED INHERITANCE

I KNEW a land whose streams did wind
More winningly than these,
Where finer shadows played behind
The clean-stemmed beechen trees.
The maidens there were deeper eyed,
The lads more swift and fair,
And angels walked at each one's side—
Would God that I were there!

Here daffodils are dressed in gold,
But there they wore the sun,
And here the blooms are bought and sold,
But there God gave each one.
There all roads led to fairyland
That here do lead to care,
And stars were lamps on Heaven's strand—
Would God, that I were there!

Here worship crawls upon her course
That there with larks would cope,
And here her voice with doubt is hoarse
That there was sweet with hope.
O land of Peace! my spirit dies
For thy once tasted air,
O earliest loss! O latest prize!
Would God that I were there!

THE WILDERNESS

FROM Life's enchantments,
Desire of place,
From lust of getting
Turn thou away, and set thy face
Toward the wilderness.

The tents of Jacob
As valleys spread,
As goodly cedars,
Or fair lign aloes, white and red,
Shall share thy wilderness.

With awful judgments,
The law, the rod,
With soft allurements
And comfortable words, will God
Pass o'er the wilderness.

The bitter waters
Are healed and sweet,
The ample heavens
Pour angel's bread about thy feet
Throughout the wilderness.

And Carmel's glory
Thou thoughtest gone,
And Sharon's roses,
The excellency of Lebanon
Delight thy wilderness.

Who passeth Jordan
Perfumed with myrrh,
With myrrh and incense?
Lo! on his arm Love leadeth her
Who trod the wilderness.

UNDER A WILTSHIRE APPLE TREE

SOME folks as can afford,
So I've heard say,
Sets up a sort of cross
Right in the garden way
To mind 'em of the Lord.

But I, when I do see
Thic apple tree
An' stoopin' limb
All spread wi' moss,
I think of Him
And how he talks wi' me.

I think of God
And how he trod
That garden long ago:
He walked, I reckon, to and fro
And then sat down
Upon the groun'
Or some low limb
What suited Him
Same as you see
On many a tree,
And on this very one
Where I at set o' sun
Do sit and talk wi' He.

An' mornings, too, I rise an' come
An' sit down where the branch be low;
A bird do sing, a bee do hum,
The flowers in the border blow,
An' all my heart's so glad an' clear
As pools be when the sun do peer:
As pools a laughin' in the light
When mornin' air is swep' an' bright,
As pools what got all Heaven in sight
So's my heart's cheer
When He be near.

He never pushed the garden door,
He left no footmark on the floor;
I never heard 'Un stir nor tread
An' yet His Hand do bless my head,
And when 'tis time for work to start
I takes Him with me in my heart.

And when I die, pray God I see
At very last thic apple tree
An' stoopin' limb,
An' think o' Him
And all He been to me.

G. K. CHESTERTON

SONNET WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

(To a popular leader, to be congratulated on the avoidance of a strike at Christmas.)

I KNOW you. You will hail the huge release,
Saying the sheathing of a thousand swords,
In silence and injustice, well accords
With Christmas bells. And you will gild with grease
The papers, the employers, the police,
And vomit up the void your windy words
To your new Christ; who bears no whip of cords
For them that traffic in the doves of peace.

The feast of friends, the candle-fruited tree,
I have not failed to honour. And I say
It would be better for such men as we
And we be nearer Bethlehem, if we lay
Shot dead on snows scarlet for Liberty,
Dead in the daylight; upon Christmas Day.

G. K. Chesterton

WHEN I CAME BACK TO FLEET STREET

WHEN I came back to Fleet Street,
Through a sunset-nook at night,
And saw the old Green Dragon
With the windows all alight,
And hailed the old Green Dragon
And the Cock I used to know,
Where all the good fellows were my friends
A little while ago.

I had been long in meadows,
And the trees took hold of me,
And the still towns in the beech-woods,
Where men were meant to be;
But old things held; the laughter,
The long unnatural night,
And all the truth the talk in hell,
And all the lies they write.

For I came back to Fleet Street,
And not in peace I came;
A cloven pride was in my heart,
And half my love was shame.
I came to fight in fairy tale,
Whose end shall no man know—
To fight the old Green Dragon
Until the Cock shall crow!

Under the broad bright windows
  Of men I serve no more,
The groaning of the old great wheels
  Thickened to a throttled roar;
All buried things broke upwards;
  And peered from its retreat,
Ugly and silent, like an elf,
  The secret of the street.

They did not break the padlocks,
  Or clear the wall away.
The men in debt that drank of old
  Still drink in debt to-day;
Chained to the rich by ruin,
  Cheerful in chains, as then
When old unbroken Pickwick walked
  Among the broken men.

Still he that dreams and rambles
  Through his own elfin air,
Knows that the street's a prison,
  Knows that the gates are there:
Still he that scorns or struggles,
  Sees frightful and afar
All that they leave of rebels
  Rot high on Temple Bar.

All that I loved and hated,
  All that I shunned and knew,
Clears in broad battle lightening;
  Where they, and I, and you,
Run high the barricade that breaks
  The barriers of the Street,
And shout to them that shrink within,
  The Prisoners of the Fleet!

THE TRUCE OF CHRISTMAS

PASSIONATE peace is in the sky
And on the snow in silver sealed
The beasts are perfect in the field
And men seem men so suddenly
But take ten swords, and ten times ten,
And blow the bugle in praising men
For we are for all men under the sun
And they are against us every one
And misers haggle, and mad men clutch
And there is peril in praising much
And we have the terrible tongues uncurled
That praise the world to the sons of the world.

The idle humble hill and wood
Are bowed about the sacred Birth
And for one little while the earth
Is lazy with the love of good
But ready are you and ready am I
If the battle blow and the guns go by
For we are for all men under the sun
And they are against us every one
For the men that hate herd altogether
To pride and gold and the great white feather
And the thing is graven in star and stone
That the men that love are all alone.

G. K. Chesterton

Hunger is hard and time is tough
But bless the beggars and kiss the kings
For hope has broken the heart of things
And nothing was ever praised enough
But hold the shield for a sudden swing
And point the sword in praising a thing
For we are for all men under the sun
And they are against us every one
And mime and merchant, thane and thrall,
Hate us because we love them all
Only till Christmas time goes by
Passionate peace is in the sky.

FRANCES CORNFORD

THE PRINCESS AND THE GIPSIES

AS I looked out one May morning,
I saw the tree-tops green;
I said: " My crown I will lay down
And live no more a queen."

Then I tripped down my golden steps
All in my silken gown,
And when I stood in the open wood,
I met some gipsies brown.

" O gentle, gentle gipsies,
That roam the wide world through,
Because I hate my crown and state
O let me come with you.

" My councillors are old and grey,
And sit in narrow chairs;
But you can hear the birds sing clear,
And your hearts are as light as theirs."

" If you would come along with us,
Then you must count the cost;
For though in Spring the sweet birds sing,
In Winter comes the frost.

" Your ladies serve you all the day
With courtesy and care;
Your fine-shod feet they tread so neat,
But a gipsy's feet go bare.

" You wash in water running warm
  Through basins all of gold;
The streams where we roam have silvery
    foam,
  But the streams, the streams are cold.

" And barley-bread is bitter to taste,
  While sugary cakes they please—
Which will you choose, O which will you
    choose,
  Which will you choose of these?

" For if you choose the mountain streams
  And barley-bread to eat,
Your heart will be free as the birds in the
    tree,
  But the stones will cut your feet.

" The mud will spoil your silken gown,
  And stain your insteps high;
The dogs in the farm will wish you harm
  And bark as you go by.

" And though your heart grow deep and
    gay,
  And your heart grow wise and rich,
The cold will make your bones to ache
  And you will die in a ditch."

" O gentle, gentle gipsies,
  That roam the wide world through,
Although I praise your wandering ways,
  I dare not come with you."

I hung about their fingers brown
  My ruby rings and chain,
And with my head as heavy as lead,
  I turned me back again.

As I went up the palace steps,
  I heard the gipsies laugh;
The birds of Spring so sweet did sing;
  My heart it broke in half.

Frances Cornford

THE DANDELION

THE dandelion is brave and gay,
And loves to grow beside the way:
A braver thing was never seen
To praise the grass for growing green;
You never saw a gayer thing,
To sit and smile and praise the Spring.

The children with their simple hearts,
The lazy men that come in carts,
The little dogs that lollop by,
They all have seen its shining eye:
And every one of them would say,
They never saw a thing so gay.

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

LIKE to islands in the seas,
Stand our personalities—
Islands where we always face
One another's watering-place.
When we promenade our sands
We can hear each other's bands,
We can see on festal nights
Red and green and purple lights,
Gilt pavilions in a row,
Stucco houses built for show.

But our eyes can never reach
Further than the tawdry beach,
Never can they hope to win
To the wonders far within:
Jagged rocks against the sky
Where the eagles haunt and cry,
Forests full of running rills,
Darkest forests, sunny hills,
Hollows where a dragon lowers,
Sweet and unimagined flowers.

WALTER DE LA MARE

AN EPITAPH

HERE lies a most beautiful lady,
Light of step and heart was she:
I think she was the most beautiful lady
That ever was in the West Country.
But beauty vanishes; beauty passes;
However rare—rare it be;
And when I crumble who will remember
This lady of the West Country?

ARABIA

FAR are the shades of Arabia,
Where the princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets
Under the ghost of the moon;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars,
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart, when out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired musicians,
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me:
Still eyes look coldly upon me,
Cold voices whisper and say—
"He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
They have stolen his wits away."

NOD

SOFTLY along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age and drenched with dew,
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.

His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

The hedge is quick and green with briar,
From their sand the conies creep;
And all the birds that fly in heaven
Flock singing home to sleep.

His lambs outnumber a noon's roses
Yet, when night's shadows fall,
His blind old sheep dog, Slumber-soon,
Misses not one of all.

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no more pain,
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
" Rest, rest, and rest again."

JOHN GALSWORTHY

THE DOWNS.

OH! the downs high to the cool sky;
And the feel of the sun-warmed moss;
And each cardoon, like a full moon,
Fairy-spun of the thistle floss;
And the beech grove, and a wood dove,
And the trail where the shepherds pass;
And the lark's song, and the wind-song,
And the scent of the parching grass!

THE PRAYER.

IF on a Spring night I went by
And God were standing there,
What is the prayer that I would cry
To Him? This is the prayer:
O Lord of Courage grave,
O Master of this night of Spring!
Make firm in me a heart too brave
To ask Thee anything!

John Galsworthy

DEVON TO ME.

WHERE my fathers stood, watching the sea,
Gale-spent herring boats hugging the lea;
There my Mother lives, moorland and tree.
Sight o' the blossoms! Devon to me!

Where my fathers walked, driving the plough;
Whistled their hearts out—who whistles now?—
There my Mother burns fire faggots free.
Scent o' the wood-smoke! Devon to me!

Where my fathers sat, passing their bowls;
—They've no cider now, God rest their souls!
There my Mother feeds red cattle three.
Sup o' the cream-pan! Devon to me!

Where my fathers sleep, turning to dust,
This old body throw when die I must!
There my Mother calls, wakeful is she!
Sound o' the West-wind! Devon to me!

Where my fathers lie, when I am gone,
Who need pity me, dead? Never one!
There my Mother clasps me. Let me be!
Feel o' the red earth! Devon to me!

EVA GORE-BOOTH

MAEVE OF THE BATTLES

I HAVE seen Maeve of the Battles wandering over the hill,
And I know that the deed that is in my heart is her deed,
And my soul is blown about by the wild wind of her will,
For always the living must follow whither the dead would lead—
I have seen Maeve of the Battles wandering over the hill.

I would dream a dream at twilight of ease and beauty and peace—
A dream of light on the mountains, and calm on the restless sea;
A dream of the gentle days of the world when battle shall cease
And the things that are in hatred and wrath no longer shall be.
I would dream a dream at twilight of ease and beauty and peace.

The foamless waves are falling soft on the sands of Lissadil
And the world is wrapped in quiet and a floating dream of grey;

But the wild winds of the twilight blow
straight from the haunted hill
And the stars come out of the darkness
and shine over Knocknarea—
I have seen Maeve of the Battles wandering
over the hill.

There is no rest for the soul that has seen
the wild eyes of Maeve;
No rest for the heart once caught in the
net of her yellow hair—
No quiet for the fallen wind, no peace for
the broken wave;
Rising and falling, falling and rising with
soft sounds everywhere,
There is no rest for the soul that has seen
the wild eyes of Maeve.

I have seen Maeve of the Battles wandering
over the hill
And I know that the deed that is in my
heart is her deed;
And my soul is blown about by the wild
winds of her will,
For always the living must follow whither
the dead would lead—
I have seen Maeve of the Battles wandering
over the hill.

RE-INCARNATION

THE darkness draws me, kindly angels weep
Forlorn beyond receding rings of light,
The torrents of the earth's desires sweep
My soul through twilight downward into night.

Once more the light grows dim, the vision fades,
Myself seems to myself a distant goal,
I grope among the bodies' drowsy shades,
Once more the Old Illusion rocks my soul.

Once more the Manifold in shadowy streams
Of falling waters murmurs in my ears,
The One Voice drowns amid the roar of dreams
That crowd the narrow pathway of the years.

I go to seek the starshine on the waves,
To count the dewdrops on the grassy hill,
I go to gather flowers that grow on graves,
The worlds' wall closes round my prisoned will.

Yea, for the sake of the wild western wind
The sphered spirit scorns her flame-built throne,
Because of primroses, time out of mind,
The Lonely turns away from the Alone.

Who once has loved the cornfield's rustling sheaves,
Who once has heard the gentle Irish rain
Murmur low music in the growing leaves,
Though he were god, comes back to earth again.

Oh Earth! green wind-swept Eirinn, I would break
The tower of my soul's initiate pride
For a grey field and a star-haunted lake,
And those wet winds that roam the country side.

I who have seen am glad to close my eyes,
I who have soared am weary of my wings,
I seek no more the secret of the wise,
Safe among shadowy, unreal human things.

Blind to the gleam of those wild violet rays
That burn beyond the rainbow's circle dim,
Bound by dark nights and driven by pale days,
The sightless slave of Time's imperious whim;

Deaf to the flowing tide of dreams divine
That surge outside the closed gates of birth,
The rhythms of eternity, too fine
To touch with music the dull ears of earth—

I go to seek with humble care and toil
The dreams I left undreamed, the deeds undone,
To sow the seed and break the stubborn soil,
Knowing no brightness whiter than the sun.

Content in winter if the fire burns clear
And cottage walls keep out the creeping damp,
Hugging the Old Illusion warm and dear,
The Silence and the Wise Book and the Lamp.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

HE in his deepest mind
That inner harmony divined
That lit the soul of John
And in the glad eyes shone
Of Dionysos, and dwelt
Where Angel Gabriel knelt
Under the dark cypress spires;
And thrilled with flameless fires
Of Secret Wisdom's rays
The Giaconda's smiling gaze;
Curving with delicate care
The pearls in Beatrice d'Este's hair;
Hiding behind the veil
Of eyelids long and pale,
In the strange gentle vision dim
Of the unknown Christ who smiled on him.
His was no vain dream
Of the things that seem,
Of date and name.
He overcame
The Outer False with the Inner True,
And overthrew
The empty show and thin deceits of sex,
Pale nightmares of this barren world that ve:
The soul of man, shaken by every breeze
Too faint to stir the silver olive trees
Or lift the Dryad's smallest straying tress
Frozen in her clear marble loveliness.

He, in curved lips and smiling eyes,
Hid the last secret's faint surprise
Of one who dies in fear and pain
And lives and knows herself again.
He, in his dreaming under the sun,
Saw change and the unchanging One,
And built in grottoes blue a shrine
To hold Reality Divine.

JOHN GURDON

SURRENDER

LIKE the diamond spark of the morning star
When night grows pale
Love gleams in the depths of thine eyes afar
Through the rifted veil
Of thy cloudy dreams.

I saw in the glint of thy wavy hair
His splendour shine
A moment, and now thy cheeks declare
The fire divine
In their rosy streams.

It leaps from thy face to mine, and flushes
From brow to chin.
The hot blood sings in my ears and gushes
With surge and spin
Through my tingling veins.

I lift up my heart for thy fervent lips
To kiss, my sweet.
I would lift up my soul, but she swooning slips
Down at thy feet,
And the rainbow stains

Brighten and cloud on her wings that close
And open slow,
As a butterfly's move, on the breast of a rose
Rocked to and fro
By a crooning wind.

O star! O blossom! I faint for bliss.
I faint for thee;
For the kiss on my closéd eyes, thy kiss
In ecstasy
That leaves me blind.

Me has love molten for thee to mould.
Ah, shape me fair
As the crown of thy life, as a crown of gold
In thy flame-like hair
Worn for a sign!

Nay, rather my life be a wind-flower
Slow kissed to death,
Petal by petal, on lips that stir
With love's own breath.
Dear life, take mine!

John Gurdon

BEFORE THE FATES

I CANNOT sing,
So weary of life my heart is and so sore
Afraid. What harp-playing
Back from the land whose name is Never More
My lost desire will bring?

* * * * *

These words she said
Before the Pheidian Fates. "There comes an end
Of love, and mine is fled:
But, if you let me, I will be your friend,
A better friend, instead."

Was it her own,
The voice I heard, marmoreal, strange, remote,
As though from yonder throne
Clotho had spoken, and the headless throat
Had uttered words of stone?

I sought her face;
It was a mask inscrutable, a screen
Baffling all hope to trace
The woman whose passionate loveliness had been
Mine for a little space.

Thereat I rose,
  Smiling, and said—"The dream is past
    and gone.
Surely Love comes and goes
  Even as he will. And who shall thwart
    him? None.
Only, while water flows

And night and day
  Chase one another round the rolling sphere,
Henceforth our destined way
  Divides. Fare onward, then, and leave
    me, dear.
There is no more to say.

* * * * *

Harsh songs and sweet
  Come to me still, but as a tale twice told.
The throb, the quivering beat
  Harry my blood no longer as of old,
Nor stir my wayworn feet.

Yet for a threne
  Once more I wear the purple robe and
    make
Sad music and serene
  For pity's sake, ah me, and the old time's
    sake,
And all that might have been.

For Love lies dead.
  Love, the immortal, the victorious,
Is fallen and vanquished.
  What charm can raise, what incantation rouse
That lowly, piteous head?

Why should I weep
  My triumph? 'Twas my life or his. Behold
The wound, how wide and deep
  Which in my side the arrow tipped with gold
Smote as I lay asleep!

Across thy way
  I came not, Love, nor ever sought thy face;
But me, who dreaming lay
  Peaceful within my quiet lurking-place,
Thy shaft was sped to slay.

When hadst thou ruth,
  That I should sorrow o'er thee and forgive?
Why should I grieve, forsooth?
  Art thou not dead for ever, and I live?
And yet—and yet, in truth

Almost I would
  That I had perished, and beside my bier
Thou and thy mother stood,
  And from relenting eyes let fall a tear
Upon me, and my blood

Changed to a flower
  Imperishable, a hyacinthine bloom,
In memory of an hour
  Splendidly lived between Delight and
    Doom
Once when I wandered from my ivory tower.

THOMAS HARDY

A TRAMPWOMAN'S TRAGEDY (182–)

I

FROM Wynyard's Gap the livelong day,
The livelong day,
We beat afoot the northward way
We had travelled times before.
The sun-blaze burning on our backs,
Our shoulders sticking to our packs,
By fosseway, fields, and turnpike tracks
We skirted sad Sedge Moor.

II

Full twenty miles we jaunted on,
We jaunted on—
My fancy-man, and jeering John,
And Mother Lee, and I.
And, as the sun drew down to west,
We climbed the toilsome Poldon crest,
And saw, of landskip sights the best,
The inn that beamed thereby.

III

For months we had padded side by side,
Ay, side by side
Through the Great Forest, Blackmoor wide,
And where the Parret ran.
We'd faced the gusts on Mendip ridge,
Had crossed the Yeo unhelped by bridge,
Been stung by every Marshwood midge,
I and my fancy man.

IV

Lone inns we loved, my man and I,
My man and I;
" King's Stag," " Windwhistle " high and dry,
" The Horse " on Hintock Green,
The cosy house at Wynyard's Gap,
" The Hut " renowned on Bredy Knap,
And many another wayside tap
Where folk might sit unseen.

V

Now as we trudged—O deadly day,
O deadly day!—
I teased my fancy-man in play
And wanton idleness.
I walked alongside jeering John,
I laid his hand my waist upon;
I would not bend my glances on
My lover's dark distress.

VI

Thus Poldon top at last we won,
At last we won,
And gained the inn at sink of sun
Far famed as " Marshall's Elm."
Beneath us figured tor and lea,
From Mendip to the western sea—
I doubt if finer sight there be
Within this royal realm.

VII

Inside the settle all a-row—
All four a-row
We sat, I next to John, to show
That he had wooed and won.
And then he took me on his knee,
And swore it was his turn to be
My favoured mate, and Mother Lee
Passed to my former one.

VIII

Then in a voice I had never heard,
I had never heard,
My only Love to me: "One word,
My lady, if you please!
"Whose is the child you are like to bear?—
His? After all my months of care?"
God knows 'twas not! But, O despair!
I nodded—still to tease.

IX

Then up he sprung, and with his knife—
And with his knife
He let out jeering Johnny's life,
Yes; there, at set of sun.
The slant ray through the window nigh
Gilded John's blood and glazing eye,
Ere scarcely Mother Lee and I
Knew that the deed was done.

X

The taverns tell the gloomy tale,
The gloomy tale,
How that at Ivel-chester jail
My Love, my sweetheart swung;
Though stained till now by no misdeed
Save one horse ta'en in time o' need;
(Blue Jimmy stole right many a steed
Ere his last fling he flung.)

XI

Thereaft I walked the world alone,
Alone, alone!
On his death-day I gave my groan
And dropped his dead-born child.
'Twas nigh the jail, beneath a tree,
None tending me; for Mother Lee
Had died at Glaston, leaving me
Unfriended on the wild.

XII

And in the night as I lay weak,
As I lay weak,
The leaves a-falling on my cheek,
The red moon low declined—
The ghost of him I'd die to kiss
Rose up and said: "Ah, tell me this!
Was the child mine, or was it his?
Speak, that I rest may find!"

XIII

O doubt not but I told him then,
I told him then,
That I had kept me from all men
Since we joined lips and swore.
Whereat he smiled, and thinned away
As the wind stirred to call up day . . .
— 'Tis past! And here alone I stray
Haunting the Western Moor.

1902.

CHORUS FROM "THE DYNASTS" (Part III).

LAST as first the question rings
Of the Will's long travailings;
Why the All-mover,
Why the All-prover
Ever urges on and measures out the droning tune of Things.

Heaving dumbly
As we deem,
Moulding numbly
As in dream,
Apprehending not how fare the sentient subjects of Its scheme.

Nay;—shall not Its blindness break?
Yea, must not Its heart awake,
Promptly tending
To Its mending
In a genial germing purpose, and for loving-kindness' sake?

Should It never
Curb or cure
Aught whatever
Those endure
Whom It quickens, let them darkle to extinction swift and sure.

But a stirring thrills the air,
Like to sounds of joyance there
That the rages
Of the ages
Shall be cancelled, and deliverance offered from the darts that were,
Consciousness the Will informing, till It fashion all things fair!

1907.

THE BALLAD SINGER

SING, Ballad-singer, raise a hearty tune;
Make me forget that there was ever a one
I walked with in the meek light of the moon
When the day's work was done.

Rhyme, Ballad-rhymer, start a country song;
Make me forget that she whom I loved well
Swore she would love me dearly, love me long,
Then—what I cannot tell!

Sing, Ballad-singer, from your little book;
Make me forget those heart-breaks, achings, fears;
Make me forget her name, her sweet sweet look—
Make me forget her tears.

RALPH HODGSON

THE MOOR

THE world's gone forward to its latest fair
And dropt an old man done with by the way,
To sit alone among the bats and stare
At miles and miles and miles of moorland bare
Lit only with last shreds of dying day.

Not all the world, not all the world's gone by;
Old man, you're like to meet one traveller still,
A journeyman well kenned for courtesy
To all that walk at odds with life and limb;
If this be he now riding up the hill
Maybe he'll stop and take you up with him....

"But thou art Death?" "Of Heavenly Seraphim
None else to seek thee out and bid thee come.
"I only care that thou art come from Him,
Unbody me—I'm tired—and get me home."

TIME, YOU OLD GIPSY MAN

TIME, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing,
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may,
Time, you old gipsy,
Why hasten away?

Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
Under Paul's dome;
Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein,
Only a moment
And off once again;
Off to some city

Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
  Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
  Just for one day?

GHOUL CARE

SOUR fiend, go home and tell the Pit:
For once you met your master,
A man who carried in his soul
Three charms against disaster,
The Devil and disaster.

Away, away, and tell the tale
And start your whelps a-whining,
Say " In the greenwood of his soul
A lizard's eye was shining,
A little eye kept shining."

Away, away, and salve your sores,
And set your hags a-groaning,
Say " In the greenwood of his soul
A drowsy bee was droning,
A dreamy bee was droning."

Prodigious Bat! Go start the walls
Of Hell with horror ringing,
Say " In the greenwood of his soul
There was a goldfinch singing,
A pretty goldfinch singing."

And then come back, come, if you please,
A fiercer ghoul and ghaster,
With all the glooms and smuts of Hell
Behind you, I'm your master!
You know I'm still your master.

W. G. HOLE

ROOSEVELT-VILLAGE STREET

NOUGHT is there here the eye to strike—
Uncurved canals where barges ply;
A hundred hamlets all alike;

Flat fields that cut an arc of sky
With men and women o'er them bent
Who needs must labour lest they die.

Would any say that lives so spent
Might break, spurred on by love and pride,
Their bars of animal content?

Nay, here live men unvexed, untried—
I mused. Yet pacing Roosevelt street
In idle humour I espied

A village man and woman meet,
And pass with never word or sign—
So strange in neighbour-folk whose feet

Haunt the same fields in rain and shine
That, curious eyed, in either face,
In curve of lip, or graven line,

I sought for hints of pain or trace
Of harsh resolve, and so grew ware
That hers was as a hiding place

Where lurked the kinship of despair;
While his bore record deeply wrought
That life for him had but one care,

And that—to mesh re-iterant thought
In labour, till at last his soul
Should find the anodyne it sought.

Hence now with dreary face he stole
Through Roosevelt Street, nor stretched his hand
To beg from life its smallest dole.

And yet these two had loved and planned
To happiest end, but for the flood
That wrecks, upreared on rock or sand,

The house of hopes. Thus—cold of mood,
He, loving wholly, could but choose
To deem her heart as his subdued;

While she, as maidens oft-times use,
Denied sweet proofs of love, was fain
To gain them by the world-old ruse;

And failing, vexed to find that vain
Was all her pretty reticence,
She happed upon a worthless swain

On whom, reserved the gold, the pence
Of liberal smiles she flung away,
Till, snared by her own innocence,

She fell—Ah, God! how far that day
She fell—from hope and promise plumb,
To deeps where lips forget to pray.

But he, apart, with sorrow dumb,
Beheld, scarce conscious of the strife,
Himself in her by fate o'ercome;

And as she passed to her new life,
Righted by still more wrong, divined
Her hate for him who called her wife,

And on the hoarded knowledge pined
And starved, till he, as she, was dead,
And nought remained but to unwind

His coil of days. So with slow tread
He goes his way through Roosevelt Street
At night and morn, nor turns his head

When past him comes the sound of feet—
Of ghostly feet that long ago
In life had made his pulses beat.

For, mark you, both are dead, and so
Small wonder is it nought should pass
Betwixt them in the street, I trow.

Yet still they move with that huge mass
Of life unpurposeful that reaps
The corn in season, mows the grass,

And then by right of labour sleeps
With privilege of dreams that ape
Fulfilment, whereby each may creep

From pain through doors of dear escape;
Save such, unhappy, as would win
Some respite for themselves, and shape

Those passionate, deep appeals that din
The Powers, ere season due, to stay
The long slow tragedies of sin.

W. G. Hole

THE HAUNTED FIELDS

I KNOW of fields by voices haunted still
That years ago grew hushed;
Whose buttercups are brushed
By feet that long have ceased to climb the hill.

On whose green slopes the happy children play
As on a mother's lap,
Then steal through gate and gap,
And by strange hedge-rows make their wondering way.

Sometimes great seas of ripening corn they spy
Across whose rippling face
The shadowy billows race
And round the gate, forlornly whispering, die;

Or in dark rutted lanes by weeds o'ergrown,
Round-eyed they watch a thrush
That breaks the noonday hush
Dashing with zest a snail against a stone;

At others, on an impulse waxing brave,
They climb the churchyard wall
And, marvelling at it all,
See strange black people gathered round a grave.

Then, without question, hurrying up the lane,
They seek once more their own—
That world in which is known
No fear of death, nor thought of change or pain.

Where still they call and answer, still they play,
And summer is ever there;
But I—I never dare
Pass through those fields, retrace the well-known way,

Lest I might meet a lad whom once I knew,
Whose eyes accusingly
Should make demand of me:
"Where are those dreams I left in charge with you?"

W. G. Hole

CAPTIVE IN LONDON TOWN

THERE comes a ghostly space
'Twixt midnight and the dawn,
When from the heart of London Town
The tides of life are drawn.

What time, when Spring is due,
The captives dungeoned deep
Beneath the stones of London Town
Grow troubled in their sleep,

And wake—mint, mallow, dock,
Brambles in bondage sore,
And grasses shut in London Town
A thousand years and more.

Yet though beneath the stones
They starve, and overhead
The countless feet pace London Town
Of men who hold them dead,

Like Samson, blind and scorned,
In pain their time they bide
To seize the roots of London Town
And tumble down its pride.

Now well by proof and sign,
By men unheard, unseen,
They know that far from London Town
The woods once more are green.

But theirs is still to wait,
Deaf to the myriad hum,
Beneath the stones of London Town
A Spring that needs must come.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

THE FELLOW-TRAVELLERS

FELLOW-TRAVELLERS here with me,
Loose for good each other's loads!
Here we come to the cross-roads:
Here must parting be.

Where will you five be to-night?
Where shall I? we little know:
Loosed from you, I let you go
Utterly from sight.

Far away go taste and touch,
Far go sight, and sound, and smell.
Fellow-Travellers, fare you well,—
You I loved so much.

THE SETTLERS

HOW green the earth, how blue the sky,
How pleasant all the days that pass,
Here where the British settlers lie
Beneath their cloaks of grass!

Here ancient peace resumes her round,
And rich from toil stand hill and plain;
Men reap and store; but they sleep sound,
The men who sowed the grain.

Hard to the plough their hands they put,
And wheresoe'er the soil had need
The furrow drave, and underfoot
They sowed themselves for seed.

Ah! not like him whose hand made yield
The brazen kine with fiery breath,
And over all the Colchian field
Strewed far the seeds of death;

Till, as day sank, awoke to war
The seedlings of the dragon's teeth,
And death ran multiplied once more
Across the hideous heath.

But rich in flocks be all these farms,
And fruitful be the fields which hide
Brave eyes that loved the light, and arms
That never clasped a bride!

O willing hearts turned quick to clay,
Glad lovers holding death in scorn,
Out of the lives ye cast away
The coming race is born.

SONG

SLEEP lies in every cup
Of land or flower:
Look how the earth drains up
Her evening hour!

Each face that once so laughed,
Now fain would lift
Lips to Life's sleeping-draught,
The goodlier gift.

Oh, whence this overflow,
This flood of rest?
What vale of healing so
Unlocks her breast?

What land, to give us right
Of refuge, yields
To the sharp scythes of light
Her poppied fields?

Nay, wait! our turn to make
Amends grows due!
Another day will break,
We must give too!

EMILIA STUART LORIMER

LOVE SONGS

I

WHITE-dreaming face of my dear,
Waken; the dawn is here.

Ope, oh so misty eyes;
Keep ope, and recognize!

Mouth, o'er the far sleep-sea
Spread now thy smile-wings for me.

II

TAKE from me the little flowers
And the bright-eyed beasts and the birds;
And the babies, oh God, take away;
Hearken my praying-words;
Empty my road of them,
Empty my house and my arm,
For black is my heart with hate,
And I would not these come to harm.

STORM

TWIGS of despair on the high trees uplifted,
Torn cloud flying behind;
Whistling wind through the dead leaves drifted;
Oho! my mind
With you is racked and ruined and rifted.

Waves of the angry firth high-flying,
Rainstorm striping the sea,
Sleet-mist shrouding the hills; day dying;
Now around me
Closes the darkness of night in, wild crying.

God of the storm, in thy storm's heart unmeted
My shallop-soul rideth where roars
The swirling water-spout—rides undefeated;
No rudder, no oars;
Only within, thy small image seated.

JAMES A. MACKERETH

TO A BLACKBIRD ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

HAIL, truant with song-troubled
breast—
Thou welcome and bewildering guest!
Blithe troubadour, whose laughing note
B ings Spring into a poet's throat,—
Flute, feathered joy! thy painted bill
Foretells the daffodil.

Enchanter, 'gainst the evening star
Singing to worlds where dreamers are,
That makes upon the leafless bough
A solitary vernal vow—
Sing, lyric soul! within thy song
The love that lures the rose along!

The snowdrop, hearing, in the dell
Doth tremble for its virgin bell;
The crocus feels within its frame
The magic of its folded flame;
And many a listening patience lies
And pushes toward its paradise.

Young love again on golden gales
Scents hawthorn blown down happy dales;
The phantom cuckoo calls forlorn
From limits of the haunted morn;—
Sing, elfin heart! thy notes to me
Are bells that ring in Faery!

Again the world is young, is young,
And silence takes a silver tongue;
The echoes catch the lyric mood
Of laughing children in the wood:
Blithe April trips in winter's way
And nature, wondering, dreams of May.

Sing on, thou dusky fount of life!
God love thee for a merry sprite!
Sing on! for though the sun be coy
I sense with thee a budding joy,
And all my heart with ranging rhyme
Is poet for the prime!

James A. Mackereth

LA DANSEUSE

SHE moved like silence swathed in light,
Like mists at morning clear;
A music that enamoured sight
Yet did elude the ear.

A rapture and a spirit clad
In motion soft as sleep;
The epitome of all things glad,
The sum of all that weep;

Her form was like a poet's mind—
By all sensations sought;
She seemed the substance of the wind,
The shape of lyric thought,—

A being 'mid terrestrial things
Transcendently forlorn,
From time bound far on filmy wings
For some diviner bourne.

The rhythms of the raptured heart
Swayed to her sweet control;
Life in her keeping all was art,
And all of body soul.

Lone-shimmering in the roseate air
She seemed to ebb and flow,
A memory, perilously fair,
And pale from long ago.

She stooped to time's remembered tears,
Yearned to undawned delight.
Ah beauty, passionate from the years!
Oh body wise and white!

She vanished like an evening cloud,
A sunset's radiant gleam.
She vanished . . . Life awhile endowed
The darkness with a dream.

James A. Mackereth

GOD RETURNS

DEAR God, before Thee many weep
And bow the solemn knee;
But I who have thy joy to keep
Will sing and dance for Thee.

Come, lilt ye, lilt ye, lightsome birds,
For ye are glad as I;
Come frisk, ye sunlit flocks and herds
And cherubs of the sky;

Sweet elfin mischief of the hill,
We'll share a laugh together—
Oh half the world is hoyden still,
And waits for whistling weather!

The God of age is staid and old,
And asks a sober tongue;
But till the heart of youth is cold
The God of youth is young!

Then kiss, blithe lass and happy lad!
The rainbow passes over,
And love and life, the leal and glad,
Must step with time the rover.

Trip buds and bells in spangled ways!
  Leap, leaves in every tree!
Ye winds and waters, nights and days,
  Dance, dance for Deity.

On every hand is elfin land,
  And faery gifts are falling;
Across the world, a twinkling band,
  The elves are calling—calling.

In welcome smile the witching skies,
  And with a jocund train,
With dancing joy-light in His eyes,
  God, God comes home again!

ALICE MEYNELL

TO THE BODY

THOU inmost, ultimate
Council of judgment, palace of decrees,
Where the high senses hold their spiritual state,
Sued by earth's embassies,
And sign, approve, accept, conceive, create;

Create—thy senses close
With the world's pleas. The random odours reach
Their sweetness in the place of thy repose,
Upon thy tongue the peach,
And in thy nostrils breathes the breathing rose.

To thee, secluded one,
The dark vibrations of the sightless skies,
The lovely inexplicit colours run;
The light gropes for those eyes.
O thou august! thou dost command the sun.

Music, all dumb, hath trod
Into thine ear her one effectual way;
And fire and cold approach to gain thy nod,
Where thou call'st up the day,
Where thou await'st the appeal of God.

CHRIST IN THE UNIVERSE

WITH this ambiguous earth
His dealings have been told us. These abide:
The signal to a maid, the human birth,
The lesson, and the young Man crucified.

But not a star of all
The innumerable host of stars has heard
How He administered this terrestrial ball.
Our race have kept their Lord's entrusted Word.

Of His earth-visiting feet
None knows the secret, cherished, perilous,
The terrible, shamefast, frightened, whispered, sweet,
Heart-shattering secret of His way with us.

No planet knows that this
Our wayside planet, carrying land and wave,
Love and life multiplied, and pain and bliss,
Bears, as chief treasure, one forsaken grave.

Nor, in our little day,
May His devices with the heavens be guessed,
His pilgrimage to thread the Milky Way
Or His bestowals there be manifest.

But in the eternities,
Doubtless we shall compare together, hear
A million alien Gospels, in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.

O, be prepared, my soul!
To read the inconceivable, to scan
The million forms of God those stars unroll
When, in our turn, we show to them a Man.

MATERNITY

ONE wept whose only child was dead,
New-born, ten years ago.
"Weep not; he is in bliss," they said.
She answered, "Even so.

"Ten years ago was born in pain
A child, not now forlorn.
But oh, ten years ago, in vain,
A mother, a mother was born."

WILL H. OGILVIE

THERE'S A CLEAN WIND BLOWING

THERE'S a clean wind blowing
Over hill-flower and peat,
Where the bell heather's growing,
And the brown burn flowing,
And the ghost-shadows going
  Down the glen on stealthy feet.
There's a clean wind blowing,
  And the breath of it is sweet.

There's a clean wind blowing,
  And the world holds but three:
The purple peak against the sky,
  The master wind, and me.
The moor birds are tossing
  Like ships upon the sea;
There's a clean wind blowing
      Free.

There's a clean wind blowing,
  Untainted of the town,
A fair-hitting foeman
  With his glove flung down.
Will ye take his lordly challenge
  And the gauntlet that he throws,
And come forth among the heather
  Where the clean wind blows!

Will H. Ogilvie

THE GARDEN OF THE NIGHT

THE Night is a far-spreading garden,
and all through the hours
Glisten and glitter and sparkle her
wonderful flowers.
First the great moon-rose full blooming;
the great bed of stars
Touching with restful gold petals the wood-
land's dark bars;
Then arc-lights like asters that blossom in
street and in square,
And lamps like primroses beyond them in
planted parterre;
Great tulips of crimson that rise from the
factory towers;
White lilies that drop from deep windows:
all flowers, the Night's flowers!

Blooms on the highway that twinkle and
fade like the stars,
Golden and red on the vans and the carts
and the cars;
Clusters of bloom in the village; lone home-
steads a-light,
Decking the lawns of the darkness, the plots
of the Night.
Then the bright blossoms of platform and
signal that shine

By the iron-paved path of the garden—the lights of the Line;
The gold flowers of comfort and caution; the buds of dull red,
Sombre with warning; the green leaves that say "Right ahead!"

Then the flowers in the harbour that low to the tide of it lean;
The lights on the port and the starboard, the red and the green,
Mixing and mingling with mast lights that move in the air,
And deck lights and wharf lights and lights upon pier-head and stair;
An edging of gold where a liner steals by like a thief;
The giant grey gleam of a searchlight that swings like a leaf;
And far out to seaward faint petals that flutter and fall
Against the white flower of the Lighthouse that gathers them all.

Then flower lights all golden with welcome—the lights of the inn;
And poisonous hell-flowers, lit doorways that beckon to sin;

Soft vesper flowers of the Churches with dark stems above;
Gold flowers of court and of cottage made one flower by love;
Beacons of windows on hillside and cliff to recall
Some wanderer lost for a season—Night's flowers one and all!
In the street, in the lane, on the Line, on the ships and the towers,
In the windows of cottage and palace—all flowers, the Night's flowers!

Will H. Ogilvie

THE CROSSING SWORDS

AS I lay dreaming in the grass
I saw a Knight of Tourney pass—
All conquering Summer. Twilit hours
Made soft light round him, rainbow flowers
Hung on his harness.

Down the dells
The fairy heralds rang blue-bells,
And even as they rocked and rang
Into the lists, full-armed, there sprang
Autumn, his helm the harvest moon,
His sword a sickle, the gleaner's tune
His hymn of battle.

Each bowed full low,
Knight to knight as to worthy foe,
Then Autumn tossed as his gauntlet down—
A leaf of the lime tree, golden brown—
And Summer bound it above the green
Of his shining breast-plate's verdant sheen.

—They closed. Above them the driving mists
Stooped and feathered—and hid the lists.
Later the cloud mist rolled away
But dead in his harness the Green Knight
lay.

STEPHEN PHILLIPS

LURES IMMORTAL

SADLY, apparently frustrate, life hangs above us,
Cruel, dark unexplained;
Yet still the immortal through mortal incessantly pierces
With calls, with appeals, and with lures.
Lure of the sinking sun, into undreamed islands,
Fortunate, far in the West;
Lure of the star, with speechless news o'er brimming,
With language of darted light;
Of the sea-glory of opening lids of Aurora,
Ushering eyes of the dawn;
Of the callow bird in the matin darkness calling,
Chorus of drowsy charm;
Of the wind, south-west, with whispering leaves illumined,
Solemn gold of the woods;
Of the intimate breeze of noon, deep-charged with a message,
How near, at times, unto speech!
Of the sea, that soul of a poet a-yearn for expression,
For ever yearning in vain!
Hoarse o'er the shingle with loud, unuttered meanings,

Hurling on caverns his heart.
Of the summer night, what to communicate, eager?
Perchance the secret of peace.
The lure of the silver to gold, of the pale unto colour,
Of the seen to the real unseen;
Of voices away to the voiceless, of sound unto silence,
Of words to a wordless calm;
Of music doomed unto wandering, still returning,
Ever to heaven and home.
The lure of the beautiful woman through flesh unto spirit,
Through a smile unto endless light;
Of the flight of a bird thro' evening over the marsh-land,
Lingering in Heaven alone;
Of the vessel disappearing over the sea-marge,
With him or with her that we love;
Of the sudden touch in the hand of a friend or a maiden,
Thrilling up to the stars.
The appealing death of a soldier, the moon just rising,
Kindling the battle-field;
Of the cup of water, refused by the thirsting Sidney,

Parched with the final pang:
Of the crucified Christ, yet lo, those arms extended,
Wide, as a world to embrace;
And last, and grandest, the lure, the invitation,
And sacred wooing of death;
Unto what regions, or heavens, or solemn spaces,
Who, but by dying, can tell?

BEAUTIFUL LIE THE DEAD

BEAUTIFUL lie the dead;
Clear comes each feature;
Satisfied not to be,
Strangely contented.

Like ships, the anchor dropped,
Furled every sail is
Mirrored with all their masts
In a deep water.

A LYRIC FROM "THE SIN OF DAVID"

I

RED skies above a level land
And thoughts of thee;
Sinking Sun on reedy strand,
And alder tree.

II

Only the heron sailing home
With heavy flight!
Ocean afar in silent foam,
And coming night!

III

Dwindling day and drowsing birds,
O my child!
Dimness and returning herds,
Memory wild.

EDEN PHILLPOTTS

A DEVON COURTING

BIRDS gived over singin'
Flitter-mice was wingin'
Mist lay on the meadows—
A purty sight to see.
Downling in the dimpsy, the dimpsy, the dimpsy—
Downling in the dimpsy
Theer went a maid wi' me.

Two gude mile o' walkin'
Not wan word o' talkin',
Then I axed a question
An' put the same to she.
Uplong in the owl-light, the owl-light, the owl-light—
Uplong in the owl-light
Theer come my maid wi' me.

A LITANY TO PAN

BY the abortions of the teeming Spring,
By Summer's starved and withered offering,
By Autumn's stricken hope and Winter's sting,
Oh, hear!

By the ichneumon on the writhing worm,
By the swift, far-flung poison of the germ,
By soft and foul brought out of hard and firm,
Oh, hear!

By the fierce battle under every blade,
By the etiolation of the shade,
By drouth and thirst and things undone half made,
Oh, hear!

By all the horrors of re-quickened dust,
By the eternal waste of baffled lust,
By mildews and by cankers and by rust,
Oh, hear!

By the fierce scythe of Spring upon the wold,
By the dead eaning mother in the fold,
By stillborn, stricken young and tortured old,
Oh, hear!

By fading eyes pecked from a dying head,
By the hot mouthful of a thing not dead,
By all thy bleeding, struggling, shrieking red,
Oh, hear!

By madness caged and madness running free,
Through this our conscious race that heeds
not thee,
In its concept insane of Liberty,
Oh, hear!

By all the agonies of all the past,
By earth's cold dust and ashes at the last,
By her return to the unconscious vast,
Oh, hear!

SWINBURNE

CHILDREN and lovers and the cloud-robed sea
Shall mourn him first; and then the mother land
Weeping in silence by his empty hand
And fallen sword that flashed for Liberty.
Song-bringer of a glad new minstrelsy,
He came and found joy sleeping and swift fanned
Old pagan fires, then snatched an altar brand
And wrote, " The fearless only shall be free!"
Oh, by the flame that made thine heart a home,
By the wild surges of thy silver song,
Seer before the sunrise, may there come
Spirits of dawn to light this aching wrong
Called Earth! Thou saw'st them in the foreglow roam;
But we still wait and watch, still thirst and long.

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER

THE WATCHER IN THE WOOD

DEEP in the wood's recesses cool
I see the fairy dancers glide,
In cloth of gold, in gown of green,
My lord and lady side by side.

But who has hung from leaf to leaf,
From flower to flower, a silken twine—
A cloud of grey that holds the dew
In globes of clear enchanted wine.

Or stretches far from branch to branch,
From thorn to thorn, in diamond rain,
Who caught the cup of crystal pine
And hung so fair the shining chain?

'Tis Death, the spider, in his net
Who lures the dancers as they glide
In cloth of gold, in gown of green,
My lord and lady side by side.

THE NAMELESS ONE

LAST night a hand pushed on the door
And tirled at the pin.
I turned my face unto the wall,
And could not cry, " Come in! "
I dared not cry " Come in! "

Last night a voice wailed round the house
And called my name upon,
And bitter, bitter did it mourn:
" Where is my mother gone?
Where is my mother gone? "

From saintly arms I slipped and flew
Adown the moon-lit skies,
I weary of the paths of Heav'n
And flowers of Paradise—
Sweet scents of Paradise!

" For little children prattle there,
And whisper all the day
Of lovely mothers on the earth,
Where once they used to play,
Who used with them to play.

" They linger laughing by the door,
And wait the threshold on;
I have no memory so fair,
Where is my mother gone?
Where is my mother gone? "

Thrice pushed the hand upon the door
And tirled at the pin.
I turned my face unto the wall,
And could not cry, " Come in! "
I dared not cry, " Come in! "

WHEN I SHALL RISE

WHEN I shall rise, and full of many fears,
Set forth upon my last long journey lone,
And leave behind the circling earth to go
Amongst the countless stars to seek God's throne.

When in the vapourish blue, I wander, lost,
Let some fair paradise reward my eyes—
Hill after hill, and green and sunny vale,
As I have known beneath the Irish skies.

So on the far horizon I shall see
No alien land but this I hold so dear—
Killiney's silver sands, and Wicklow hills,
Dawn on my frightened eyes as I draw near.

And if it be no evil prayer to breathe,
Oh, let no stranger saint or seraphim
Wait there to lead up to the judgment seat,
My timid soul with weeping eyes and dim.

But let them come, those dear and lovely ghosts,
In all their human guise and lustihood,
To stand upon that shore and call me home,
Waving their joyful hands as once they stood—
As once they stood!

ARTHUR SYMONS

TANAGRA

To Cavalieri dancing

TELL me, Tanagra, who made
Out of clay so sweet a thing?
Are you the immortal shade
Of a man's imagining?
In your incarnation meet
All things fair and all things fleet.

Arrow from Diana's bow,
Atalanta's feet of fire,
Some one made you long ago,
Made you out of his desire.
Waken from the sleep of clay
And rise and dance the world away.

GIOVANNI MALATESTA AT RIMINI

GIOVANNI Malatesta, the lame old man,
Walking one night, as he was used, being old,
Upon the grey seashore at Rimini,
And thinking dimly of those two whom love
Led to one death, and his less happy soul
For which Cain waited, heard a seagull scream,
Twice, like Francesca; for he struck but twice.
At that, rage thrust down pity; for it seemed
As if those windy bodies with the sea's
Unfriended heart within them for a voice
Had turned to mock him, and he called them friends,
And he had found a wild peace hearing them
Cry senseless cries, halloing to the wind.
He turned his back upon the sea; he saw
The ragged teeth of the sharp Apennines
Shut on the sea; his shadow in the moon
Ploughed up a furrow with an iron staff
In the hard sand, and thrust a long lean chin
Outward and downward, and thrust out a foot,
And leaned to follow after. As he saw
His crooked knee go forward under him
And after it the long straight iron staff,

" The staff," he thought, " is Paolo: like that
staff
And like that knee we walked between the
sun,
And her unmerciful eyes "; and the old man,
Thinking of God, and how God ruled the
world,
And gave to one man beauty for a snare
And a warped body to another man,
Not less than he in soul, not less than he
In hunger and capacity for joy,
Forgot Francesca's evil and his wrong,
His anger, his revenge, that memory,
Wondering at man's forgiveness of the old
Divine injustice, wondering at himself:
Giovanni Malatesta judging God.

LA MELINITE: MOULIN ROUGE

OLIVIER Metra's Waltz of Roses
Sheds in a rhythmic shower
The very petals of the flower;
And all is roses,
The rouge of petals in a shower.

Down the long hall the dance returning
Rounds the full circle, rounds
The perfect rose of lights and sounds,
The rose returning
Into the circle of its rounds.

Alone, apart, one dancer watches
Her mirrored, morbid grace;
Before the mirror, face to face,
Alone she watches
Her morbid, vague, ambiguous grace.

Before the mirror's dance of shadows
She dances in a dream,
And she and they together seem
A dance of shadows,
Alike the shadows of a dream.

The orange-rosy lamps are trembling
Between the robes that turn;
In ruddy flowers of flame that burn
The lights are trembling:
The shadows and the dancers turn.

And, enigmatically smiling,
In the mysterious night,
She dances for her own delight,
A shadow smiling
Back to a shadow in the night.

EVELYN UNDERHILL

IMMANENCE

I COME in the little things,
Saith the Lord:
Not borne on morning wings
Of majesty, but I have set My Feet
Amidst the delicate and bladed wheat
That springs triumphant in the furrowed sod.
There do I dwell, in weakness and in power;
Not broken or divided, saith our God!
In your strait garden plot I come to flower:
About your porch My Vine
Meek, fruitful, doth entwine;
Waits, at the threshold, Love's appointed hour.

I come in the little things,
Saith the Lord:
Yea! on the glancing wings
Of eager birds, the softly pattering feet
Of furred and gentle beasts, I come to meet
Your hard and wayward heart. In brown bright eyes
That peep from out the brake, I stand confest.
On every nest
Where feathery Patience is content to brood

And leaves her pleasure for the high emprise
Of motherhood—
There doth my Godhead rest.

I come in the little things,
Saith the Lord:
My starry wings
I do forsake,
Love's highway of humility to take;
Meekly I fit my stature to your need.
In beggar's part
About your gates I shall not cease to plead—
As man, to speak with man—
Till by such art
I shall achieve My Immemorial Plan,
Pass the low lintel of the human heart.

Evelyn Underhill

INTROVERSION

WHAT do you seek within, O Soul,
my Brother?
What do you seek within?
I seek a life that shall never die,
Some haven to win
From mortality.

What do you find within, O Soul, my Brother?
What do you find within?
I find great quiet where no noises come.
Without, the world's din:
Silence in my home.

Whom do you find within, O Soul, my
Brother?
Whom do you find within?
I find a friend that in secret came:
His scarred hands within
He shields a faint flame.

What would you do within, O Soul, my
Brother?
What would you do within?
Bar door and window that none may see:
That alone we may be
(Alone! face to face,
In that flame-lit place!)
When first we begin
To speak one with another.

Evelyn Underhill

ICHTHUS

THREATENING the sky,
Foreign and wild the sea,
Yet all the fleet of fishers are afloat;
They lie
Sails furled
Each frail and tossing boat,
And cast their little nets into an unknown world.
The countless, darting splendours that they miss,
The rare and vital magic of the main,
The which for all their care
They never shall ensnare—
All this
Perchance in dreams they know;
Yet are content
And count the night well spent
If so
The indrawn net contain
The matter of their daily nourishment.

The unseizable sea,
The circumambient grace of Deity,
Where live and move
Unnumbered presences of power and love,
Slips through our finest net:
We draw it up all wet,
A-shimmer with the dew-drops of that deep.

And yet
For all their toil the fishers may not keep
The instant living freshness of the wave;
Its passing benediction cannot give
The mystic meat they crave
That they may live.

But on some stormy night
We, venturing far from home,
And casting our poor trammel to the tide,
Perhaps shall feel it come
Back to the vessel's side,
So easy and so light
A child might lift,
Yet hiding in its mesh the one desired gift;
That living food
Which man for ever seeks to snatch from out
the flood.

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MRS MARGARET L. WOODS

SONGS

I'VE heard, I've heard
The long low note of a bird,
The nightingale fluting her heart's
one word.

I know, I know
Pink carnations heaped with snow.
Summer and winter alike they blow.

I've lain, I've lain
Under roses' delicate rain,
That fall and whisper and fall again.

Come woe, come white
Shroud o' the world, black night!
I have had love and the sun's light.

THE CHANGELING

WHEN did the Changeling enter in?
How did the Devil set him a gin
Where the little soul lay like a rabbit
Faint and still for a fiend to grab it?
I know not.

Where was the fount of our dishonour?
Was it a father's buried sin?
Brought his mother a curse upon her?
I trow not.

So pretty
Body and soul, the child began.
He carolled and kissed and laughed and ran,
A glad creature of Earth and Heaven,
And the knowledge of love and the secret of pity,
That need our learning,
God to him at his birth had given.

One remembers
Trifles indeed—the backward-turning
Way he would smile from the field at play.
Sometimes the Thing that sits by the embers
Smiles at me—devil!—the selfsame way.
If only early enough one had guessed,
Known, suspected, watched him at rest,
Noted the Master's sign and fashion,

And unbefooled by the heart's compassion,
Undeterred by form and feature,
Caught the creature,
Tried by the test of water and fire,
Pierced and pinioned with silver wire,
Circled with signs that could control,
Battered with spells that tame and torture
The demon nature,
Till he writhed in his shape, a fiend confest,
And vanished—
Then had come back, the poor soul banished,
Then had come back the little soul.
But now there is nothing to do or to say.
Will no one grip him and tear him away,
The Thing of Blood that gnaws at my breast?

Perhaps he called me and I was dumb.
Unconcerned I sat and heard
Little things,
Ivy tendrils, a bird's wings,
A frightened bird—
Or faint hands at the window-pane?
And now he will never come again,
The little soul. He is quite lost.

I have summoned him back with incantations
Of heart-deep sobs and whispering cries,
Of anguished love and travail of prayer,
Nothing has answered my despair
But long sighs

Of pitiful wind in the fir-plantations.
Poor little soul! He cannot come.
Perchance on a night when trees were tost,
The Changeling rode with his cavalcade
Among the clouds, that were tossing too,
And made the little soul afraid.
They hunted him madly, the howling crew,
Into the Limbo of the lost,
Into the Limbo of the others
Who wander crying and calling their mothers.

Now I know
The creatures that come to harry and raid
How they ride in the airy regions,
Dance their rounds on meadow and moor,
Gallop under the earth in legions,
Hunt and holloa and run their races
Over tombs in burial-places.

In the common roads where people go,
Masked and mingled with human traces,
I have marked, I who know,
In the common dust a devil's spoor.

To somebody's gate
A Thing is footing it, cares not much
Whether he creep through an Emperor's portal
And steal the fate

Of a Prince, or into a poor man's hutch—
For the grief will be everywhere as great
And he'll everywhere spread the smirch of sin—
So long as a taste of our blood he may win,
So long as he may become a mortal.

I beseech you,
Prince and poor man, to watch the gate.
The heart is poisoned where he has fed,
The house is ruined that lets him in.
Yet I know I shall never teach you.
With the voice of the dear and the eyes of the dead
He will come to the door, and you'll let him in.

If I could forget
Only that ever I had a child,
If only upon some mirk midnight,
When he stands at the door, all wet and wild,
With his owl's feather and dripping hair,
I could lie warm and not care,
I should rid myself of this Changeling yet.

I carried my woe to the Wise Man yonder,
" You sell forgetfulness, they say.
How much to pay
To forget a son who is my sorrow?"

The Wise Man began to ponder.
" Charms have I, many a one,
To make a woman forget her lover,
A man his wife or a fortune fled,
To make the day forget the morrow,
The doer forget the deed he has done,
But a mighty spell must I borrow
To make a woman forget her son,
For this I will take a royal fee.
Your house," said he,
" The storied hangings richly cover,
On your banquet table there were six
Golden branched candlesticks,
And of noble dishes you had a score.
The crown you wore
I remember, the sparkling crown.
All of these,
Madam, you shall pay me down.
Also the day I give you ease
Of golden guineas you pay a hunderd.

Laughing I left the Wise Man's door.
Has he found such things where a Changeling sits?
The home is darkened from roof to floor,
The house is naked and ravaged and plundered
Where a Changling sits
On the hearthstone, warming his shivering fits.

He sits at his ease, for he knows well
He can keep his post.
He has left me nothing to pay the cost
Of snatching my heart from his private Hell.

Yet when all is done and told
I am glad the Wise Man in the City
Had no pity
For me, and for him I had no gold.

Because if I did not remember him,
My little child—Ah! What should we have,
He and I? Not even a grave
With a name of his own by the river's brim.
Because if among the poppies gay,
On the hill-side, now my eyes are dim,
I could not fancy a child at play,
And if I should pass by the pool in the quarry
And never see him, a darling ghost,
Sailing a boat there, I should be sorry—
If in the firelit, lone December
I never heard him come scampering post
Haste down the stair—if the soul that is lost
Came back, and I did not remember.

THE POETRY SOCIETY

THE objects of the Society, as stated in the Constitution, are to promote in the words of Matthew Arnold, adopted as a motto, "a clearer, deeper sense of the best in poetry and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it";

To bring together lovers of poetry with a view to extending and developing the intelligent interest in, and proper appreciation of, poetry;

To form Local Centres and Reading Circles and encourage the intelligent reading of verse with due regard to emphasis and rhythm and the poet's meaning, and to study and discuss the art and mission of poetry;

To promote and hold private and public recitals of poetry;

To form sub-societies for the reading and study of the works of individual poets, and to encourage the production of poetic drama.

THE ordinary Membership subscription is 7s. 6d., with an entrance fee of 2s. 6d. The journal of the Society—THE POETRY REVIEW—is supplied to members without further charge.

The Society is intended to bind poetry readers and lovers together throughout the English-speaking world, forming a desirable freemasonry, with poetry—the first and best of all arts—as the connecting link.

By means of Local Centres membership is made active and effective, members meeting together intimately for the reading and study of poetry and

co-operating with Headquarters in the general work of the Society. A member of the Society is a member of the Centre most convenient for him to attend, and a member of any Centre is a member of the Society as a whole and may attend any Centre meetings anywhere on giving notice to the Secretary. This Centre system carries into effect the idea of a poetical freemasonry, a South African member visiting or going to reside in London or South Australia or wherever the Society has a branch being welcomed by and becoming a member of the local group.

Centres or individual members not formed into groups maintain regular communication with the Head Office, from which advice and direction may be obtained with respect to the formation, conduct and programme of Centre meetings, propaganda work, etc., and each Centre is expected to hold at least two public recitals per year, with a view to interesting the general public and showing what an exquisite pleasure can be derived from the intelligent reading and speaking of verse.

The Society deals practically with the art of speaking verse and holds periodical examinations and "auditions" of readers and teachers with a view to securing the adoption of better methods and greater attention being given to the technique of reading and speaking. It has also under consideration a scheme for developing its work among schools and colleges.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS & INQUIRIES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY, THE POETRY SOCIETY, 16 FEATHERSTONE BUILDINGS, HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

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